

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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INFO USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

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AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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USIA FOR IEE AND IBS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR UR US

SUBJ: IZVESTIA ON US-SOVIET RELATIONS

REF: MOSCOW 3717

1. IZVESTIA COMMENTARY (MARCH 22 EVENING EDITION) ON US-SOVIET RELATIONS WARNS THAT "UNWILLINGNESS TO REMOVE DISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT OF USSR IN TRADE WOULD CAST DOUBT ON WASHINGTON'S SINCERITY IN IMPROVING RELATIONS." WHILE QUOTED PASSAGE APPEARS IN CONTEXT OF ATTACK ON SENATOR JACKSON, THE WAY IT IS WORDED LEAVES TARGET AMBIGUOUS. COMMENTATORS, LOSEV AT SAME TIME ACKNOWLEDGES FACT THAT PRESIDENT NIXON HAS THREE TIMES IN PAST FEW DAYS PUBLICLY DEFENDED IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH USSR. THIS POLICY ENJOYS BROAD PUBLIC SUPPORT AS SHOWN BY OPINION POLLS,
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EVEN IN AMERICAN HINTERLAND. IT HAS BIPARTISAN BACKING IN

CONGRESS FROM SUCH LEADERS AS MANSFIELD, FULBRIGHT AND KENNEDY.

2. IN ECHO OF BREZHNEV'S PIQUE AT BOURGEOIS PRESS, LOSEV SAYS NO MATTER HOW MUCH US PRESS MAY SHOWER OPPONENTS OF DETENTE WITH ATTENTION, "THESE GENTLEMEN" HAVE NOGHING TO OFFER AMERICANS INSTEAD OF THE FIRM BASIS OF RELATIONS LAID AT THE TWO SUMMITS. HE CITES PRESIDENT'S DECSRIPTION OF GRIM ALTERNATIVE TO DETENTE (MARCH 15 CHICAGO REMARKS) AND ADDS FULBRIGHT'S VIEW THAT ONLY ALTERNATIVE TO COOPERATION IS RENEWED COLD WAR. FOR THE USSSR, LOSEV ASSERTS, THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE CHOICE; DESPITE EFFORTS OF ENEMIES OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE, USSR WILL CONTINUE TO PURSUE UNSWERVINGLY A POLICY OF IMPROVING US-SOVIET RELATIONS.

3. LOSEV IDENTIFIES THE OPPOSITION AS INFLUENTIAL COALITION OF MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX, ZIONIST LOBBY, OVERRIPE LIBERALS AND ULTRARIGHTISTS. SOME, LIKE RUSSELL LONG, SEEK FOREIGN POLICY CONCESSIONS ACROSS THE BOARD. OTHERS WANT TO BLOCK US-SOVIET COOPERATION IN SETTTLING MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT, ALTHOUGH THEY KNOW THAT "PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IN THAT REGION IS IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT PARTICIPATION OF USSR."

4. COMMENT: MORE THAN ANY RECENT MAJOR PRESS COMMENTARY,(IZVESTIA MINCES NO WORDS IN CRITICIZING US OPPONENTS OF DETENTE. ITS LANGUAGE ON MFN IS RATHER SHARPER THAN STANDARD TREATMENT, BUT IT SCARECELY RAISES MILITARY/DISARMAMENT ISSUES. WHILE COMMENTARY RELFECTS APPARENT RECENT DECISION TO EASE THE RESTRAINTS ON PRESS CRITICISM OF US, IT MAY REFLECT ONLY ONE AMONG SEVERAL VIEWPOINTS IN HIGH CIRCLES. DISPARAGING REFERENCE TO SENATOR LONG, FOR EXAMPLE, CONTRASTS SHARPLY WITH LAUDATORY REMARKS ABOUT SENATOR MADE BY FON TRADE MIN PATOLICHEV DURING CALL BY AMBASSADOR MARCH 14 (REFTEL). NEVERTHELESS, ARTICLE HIGHLIGHTS ASPECTS OF MFN ISSUE BOTHERING MOSCOW AT THIS TIME, BUT, SIGNIFICANTLY, PROVIDES REASSURANCE THAT SOVIETS INTEND TO PRESS AHEAD WITH IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS.
STOESSEL

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